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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/. . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements* of the *Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

2633rd MEETING

Held in New York on Tuesday, 10 December 1985, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Léandre BASSOLE (Burkina Faso).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Australia, Burkina Faso, China, Denmark, Egypt, France, India, Madagascar, Peru, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2633)

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Letter dated 6 December 1985 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17671).

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 6 December 1985 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/17671)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mexico, Nicaragua, the Syrian Arab Republic and Viet Nam in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the debate, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Tinoco (Nicaragua) took a place at the Council table; Mr. Rajaie-Khorassani (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Moya-Palencia (Mexico), Mr. El-Fattal (Syrian Arab Republic) and Mr. Bui Xuan Nhat (Viet Nam) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now begin consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting today in response to the request contained in a letter dated 6 December 1985 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, issued as document (S/17671).

3. I wish to draw the attention of members of the Council to documents S/17674, S/17675 and S/17676, which contain the texts of letters dated 5 and 6 December from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Nicaragua to the Secretary-General.

4. The first speaker is the representative of Nicaragua.

5. Mr. TINOCO (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I wish to express to you, Mr. President, the appreciation of the Nicaraguan delegation for your having convened this meeting, requested by my country to inform the Security Council of the most recent events provoked by the United States in Central America, which have aggravated the already explosive situation there.

6. The Council and public opinion are aware of the criminal and mercenary war that the United States Government has been waging against the Nicaraguan Government since 1981. In recent weeks there has been an escalation of its involvement in that war of aggression, as well as in the type of weapons and supplies provided to the counter-revolutionary forces. That escalation of the war in Central America is characterized by the following factors.

7. In May the United States Congress, in yet another act of defiance of the most fundamental norms governing international relations, approved the appropriation of $27 million to finance activities aimed at overthrowing the legitimate Government of my country. That humanitarian aid, as it was euphemistically described in order to conceal the real purpose of this act, was in fact intended to continue uninterrupted the flow of military supplies to the counter-revolutionary bands which, under the control and leadership of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States, are operating from the territory of the neighbouring countries of Honduras and Costa Rica.

8. In the same context, further heightening tension in the region, the Reagan Administration announced only a few days ago the holding of new joint military manoeuvres in Honduras which will last without interruption throughout the first six months of 1986. During those manoeuvres, called "Terensio Sierra", the United States will continue to build a military infrastructure guaranteeing a rearguard position for the mercenaries and providing them with

facilities should they decide to unleash a direct invasion of Nicaragua.

9. Similarly, during November – just a few days ago – the United States Congress again yielded to the pressures and blackmail of the Reagan Administration and approved a request by the President to provide his mercenaries with trucks, aircraft, fast launches, helicopters, sophisticated communications equipment and a constant flow of intelligence gathered by the technical machinery of the United States intelligence apparatus. To this worrying situation was added last week an event unprecedented in the history of our continent – the use by the counter-revolutionary mercenary forces of surface-to-air missiles supplied by the United States Government. That is clearly an unprecedented escalation of the crisis and conflict in Central America.

10. There may be some people in this Chamber who have doubts about the truth of the statement that the United States Government supplied those surface-to-air missiles to the mercenary forces attacking the Government of Nicaragua. In order to dispel some of those doubts, I shall read some extracts from the press and public statements by officials of the United States Administration clearly showing that Government's responsibility for the supply of those sophisticated weapons.

11. On 14 September this year the highest military leader of the FDN [*Frente Democratico Nicaragüense*], the ex-Somozist Colonel Enrique Bermúdez, told the media that his organization would soon begin attacking Soviet-made helicopters with portable American-made red-eye rockets.

12. Later, on 31 October, the Honduran daily newspaper *El Tiempo* reported:

> "Recently some 200 cadres of the FDN were rewarded, after a course in their use, with SAM-7 missiles supplied to the insurgents by the United States after the Sandinists had obtained modern Soviet helicopters."

13. On 13 November the counter-revolutionary leader Indalecio Rodríguez publicly announced that the training being given to the FDN mercenaries was based on the use of surface-to-air missiles, and that some of them had been photographed by the international press, thus showing the world that it was true that his organization possessed those weapons. He said that in the coming weeks the Sandinists would feel the impact of those weapons and see that the defence of the "freedom fighters" was not passive, but active.

14. Lastly, that same counter-revolutionary, Rodríguez, said that his forces had weapons that were adequate to the task of counteracting the Sandinist forces, and that the most important thing at that time was the arrival of those weapons from the United States.

15. Since January 1985 the Nicaraguan Government has known, thanks to confidential and reliable sources, that United States experts are training counter-revolutionaries at the Las Vegas camp in the department of El Paraíso, in Honduras, in the use of SAM-7 missiles. Those confidential sources have also confirmed to us that, since mid-year, the United States Government has delivered at least 30 such missiles to the forces encamped at Las Vegas.

16. It is useful to recall here the complaints we have lodged in the past to the effect that in the El Paraíso department, in Honduras, in an area of approximately 40 kilometres along the border with Nicaragua, there are a number of counter-revolutionary camps such as Las Trojes, Cifuentes, Arenales, Las Vegas—the camp I have already mentioned—and others, where some 2,000 mercenaries are encamped with the full knowledge of the Honduran Government. The Las Vegas camp is one of the largest concentrations of counter-revolutionary forces of the many that exist inside Honduran territory and along the border.

17. American television networks, some of which are sympathetic towards the United States Administration and the mercenary forces, have filmed those missiles in the hands of the counter-revolutionary forces and shown their films publicly.

18. If anyone were nevertheless to have any further doubts as to the responsibility of the United States for the supply of those missiles to the counter-revolutionary forces, it would be useful to point out that the American Under-Secretary of State, Elliot Abrams, just a few days ago, in statements made before a committee of the United States Congress, reported that the Nicaraguan helicopter had been downed by a SAM-7 missile. That acknowledgement and confirmation by Under-Secretary Abrams occurred before the special committee appointed by the Nicaraguan Government to investigate the downing of the helicopter could confirm the use of those missiles by the mercenary forces.

19. For his part, the United States Secretary of State, George Shultz, who in recent weeks has been characterized by his brazenness in acknowledging his interference in the internal affairs of Nicaragua by supporting counter-revolutionary forces, indicated, at an official conference as he was leaving for Europe, that:

> "[The contras] in some way obtained the missiles, and we are pleased that they did so. . . . The fact that at the present time the contras seem able to fire against those helicopters could stem their use to some extent, and that is very good. May the contras have more of those weapons."

20. The Nicaraguan Government considers it fundamental that the Security Council reflect on the significance of the introduction and supply of this type of weapon to irregular forces, to mercenary forces, in the Central American region.

21. First of all it must be pointed out that this is the first time in the history of the American continent that an irregular force fighting against an established Government has received this type of weapon. It must be recalled

that Latin America has a long tradition of guerrilla warfare, of political groups that have taken up arms against established Governments, in the immense majority of cases as a result of historical situations of oppression and economic and political marginalization to which those peoples have been subjected by oligarchies and by American imperialism. Such groups have existed virtually since the 1950s; some of them to this very day are still fighting and carrying out military activities against various Governments in the Latin American region, but none of them has obtained this type of sophisticated weapon.

22. Furthermore it must be noted that this very dangerous weapon has been placed not only in the hands of an irregular group but also in the hands of a terrorist and mercenary group that has not precisely been characterized by its respect for human rights or for the physical integrity of persons but that rather, on the contrary, has in the past four and a half years dedicated itself to the systematic murder of farmers, teachers, the elderly, children, women and mothers, for which it has been denounced many times in the past. It is to persons of that type that sophisticated weapons are being given.

23. In this respect, terrorists are being given unprecedented powers on this continent. This therefore brings us to the conclusion that, given this situation, the very safety of civil aviation in the Central American region is now in jeopardy. Really, nothing – not even the very Government of the United States, which has often recognized that the contras are often out of control – can guarantee that those terrorists are not going to use those missiles against a civilian aircraft belonging to either Nicaragua or another country, thinking or assuming that some of these aircraft may be carrying revolutionary or Sandinist leaders, and of thus making a spectacular strike at the Nicaraguan revolution.

24. It is therefore a fact that if the legitimization of the use of that type of weapon by the counter-revolutionary, mercenary forces is permitted, the United States will have managed not only to strengthen those forces from the standpoint of their military resources but also in practice to repeat the criminal action of the mining of Nicaraguan ports in 1984, with the difference that in this case it will be mining Central American air space. If this situation continues not even the United States will in the near future be able to guarantee the safety of civil aviation in our Central American region.

25. Without question, that act has raised the Central American conflict to unprecedented levels of seriousness. There is no doubt that this escalation, this new step in the aggression against Nicaragua represented by the supply of missiles to the counter-revolutionary forces gives the Central American conflict a dimension which will affect not only the stability of Central America, but the very stability of Latin America.

26. Moreover, this United States Government action confirms that Government's disdain for international law and for the 10 May 1984 Order of the International Court of Justice directing the United States to cease its aggression against Nicaragua. It explains the reasons behind the United States Government's decision to reject the binding jurisdiction of the International Court.

27. We believe it useful to enquire into or reflect on the reasoning behind the decision by the United States Administration to provide such weapons to the counter-revolutionary forces. To understand that reasoning, it is essential to be familiar with the ideas contained in the United States Government's official response to the note of protest sent to it on Thursday, 5 December, by the Government of Nicaragua after confirmation of the downing of an MI-8 transport helicopter by a missile launched by the mercenaries.

28. In that official message sent to the Nicaraguan Chargé d'affaires in Washington by Mr. Richard Melton of the Central American office of the Department of State, we read the following:

"The act to which the Nicaraguan note refers was carried out by the FDN, not by the United States.

"That act constitutes a logical response to the introduction of highly-sophisticated Soviet attack helicopters.

"The escalation is a result of the introduction of those helicopters, not of measures taken by the opposition to defend itself against them.

"Those helicopters are used to cause high casualties; they are effective and have been used to carry out genocide in Afghanistan.

"The SAM-7 missile is thus a purely defensive weapon.

"The Government of Nicaragua has adopted a provocative stand in the face of political, civil and armed opposition."

The text I have quoted sets out precisely the reasoning and arguments officially transmitted in Washington by the Government of the United States to the Government of Nicaragua on Friday, 6 December.

29. We think it is important to consider more deeply the consequences of that reasoning, of that official position of the United States Government. First of all, a careful reading of the text which I have quoted shows that at no time does the United States Government see fit to deny that it is responsible for the provision of those missiles to the counter-revolutionary forces. In its official reply, the United States Government does not deny having supplied those missiles, but confines itself to saying that the act itself was carried out by FDN forces and not by the United States, despite the fact that the note of protest sent by the Nicaraguan Government contains an accusation and clear protest to the United States Government for having supplied the mercenaries with such weapons.

30. Furthermore, in that document the United States Government draws no distinction between the established Government—the revolutionary Government of Nicaragua, with which the United States maintains diplomatic relations—and a mercenary group, the FDN. It confines itself to reaffirming its continued support for the mercenary forces and to noting that the action taken by the counter-revolutionary forces was logical. That is a monumental example of the most utter disdain for international law.

31. If we pursue our examination of this logic of the United States Government we find the following.

32. On the one hand the United States Government focuses its attention on the reasoning that the Sandinist air force helicopters are effective and are intended to produce high casualties. Then it states that the FDN mercenary group, which opposes the Government of Nicaragua, has the right to use missiles to defend itself against the effectiveness of the Sandinist air force helicopters. Following that logic, we would conclude that any irregular or insurgent group faced with the deployment of helicopters or any other type of effective aerial measures by a legally established Government could possibly receive such SAM-7 missiles from the United States Government.

33. If we continue from another standpoint to consider the idea of the effectiveness of weapons possessed by a legally established and internationally recognized Government for its struggle against irregular or insurgent groups, we will find that a great many countries have effective means to carry out their counter-insurgency activities.

34. To be brief, if we were to apply this United States reasoning to the situation in Central America we would find ourselves in a special situation. For this we can base ourselves on data we consider to be reliable.

35. We can base ourselves on data supplied in the most recent study of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, in London, which, in the 1985-1986 edition of *The Military Balance*, shows that the armed forces of El Salvador have at their disposal the following airborne means for counter-insurgency: 50 United States UH-1H helicopters, 4 Hughes 500-MD attack helicopters, and 8 A-37 Dragonfly jet aircraft, which are bombers used in counter-insurgency operations. There can be no doubt in anyone's mind that such air *matériel* in the possession of El Salvador is indeed effective in that Government's struggle against the insurgents. If we were to apply the American reasoning strictly, we would have to conclude that the United States should also be prepared to assist the revolutionary forces opposing the Government of El Salvador to counteract the effectiveness of those weapons by supplying them with surface-to-air missiles such as those it has supplied to the Nicaraguan counter-revolutionary forces.

36. In the case of Honduras, the same London study reports that the Honduran air force has the following counter-insurgency means: 22 UH-1H helicopters, 14 Super-Mystère D-2 aircraft and 11 A-37 Dragonfly aircraft. That report also points out that Honduras has ordered and is about to receive F-5E aircraft produced by the United States. There can be no doubt that all those weapons are all effective instruments for tackling any sort of insurgency situation that may arise inside Honduras. We wonder if the United States Administration will follow the logic applied in the case of Nicaragua and supply anti-aircraft missiles to the armed opposition groups in Honduras so that they too can counteract the effectiveness of the aforementioned devices.

37. Unfortunately, the tragedy of this official reasoning by the United States Government, of this Orwellian inversion of reality, does not stop there. In the frenzied illogic of the text quoted earlier we can also read, "The Government of Nicaragua has adopted a provocative attitude towards the armed political opposition." According to this logic, Nicaragua is provoking the armed opposition, that is, the CIA mercenaries, the counter-revolutionary forces; it is provoking them by defending itself against the activity and the warfare in which they are engaging on behalf of the Government of the United States. According to that logic, the Government of Nicaragua is provoking the counter-revolutionary forces by defending itself against the attempts by the United States to overthrow it. If we try to follow such logic we will find ourselves once again in a situation in which the Organization is seen to be replete with provocative countries or Governments because such Governments, in one way or another, are confronting and combating the action of insurgent groups fighting under one flag or another.

38. That logic is the height of brazen shamelessness. It is essentially, and in a word, the logic of a terrorist State.

39. The statements of the United States Administration and the ideas set forth in its official communication to the Government of Nicaragua would be truly laughable if their consequences were not so unfortunate and so tragic for the people of Central America. The logic we have just examined is the logic the United States Administration officially employs to justify having supplied SAM-7 missiles to the mercenary forces attacking the Government of Nicaragua. That is the logic of the absurd. It is Orwellian, and it distorts reality. It is the logic of irrationality. It is the logic of State terrorism, of arrogance and of imperialist policies. It is a logic that destroys international law and makes it a dead letter. It is the logic of warfare and of the spreading of the conflict in Central America, of the destabilization of Latin America. It is the logic of those who have no interest in just, negotiated political solutions, who have no interest in the Contadora process. It is the logic of the Reagan doctrine on Central America and the third world.

40. Nicaragua has appeared before this forum to denounce, to warn against and to fight the kind of reasoning we have just described because that logic and that doctrine are now being applied in Central America with tragic and harmful results, and because it is a reasoning that is now being extended to other parts of the world—to southern Africa and other areas where peoples are struggling for their independence and their right to self-determination.

There can be no doubt that the spread of that type of thought and action on the part of the United States Administration, when applied on a global level to various hotbeds of tension, represents a real threat to world peace.

41. Nicaragua is confident, none the less, that the unity of the international community will succeed in averting that threat. The international community must unseat the Horseman of the Apocalypse that is threatening Central America and Latin America by supplying surface-to-air missiles to mercenary forces. The international community—the peoples of the world—has already blocked and defeated another damaging venture against the people of Nicaragua, one that posed a threat because of its repercussions on all the peoples of the world: the mining of Nicaraguan ports on both oceans by the Government of the United States.

42. For their part, the Government and people of Nicaragua, faithful to their determination to defend their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, their political independence and self-determination, will continue to defend themselves against the mercenary forces acting in the service of the United States Government, notwithstanding the resources they enjoy and that may be supplied to them in the future. We will continue to fight those enemies of the independence of Latin America; we will continue to fight against the mercenaries. We do not doubt that, sooner rather than later, our people will overcome even direct intervention by the United States, if that happens.

43. Mr. WALTERS (United States of America) (*interpretation from French*): As this is the first opportunity I have had, Sir, to speak before the Council since you assumed the presidency, I should like to express the great satisfaction it is for my Government, and for me personally, to see you presiding over the Council. The Council is indeed privileged to conduct its work this month under your leadership. I should like also to express the gratitude of my delegation for the professional, judicious and fair manner in which your predecessor, the representative of Australia, Richard Woolcott, conducted the presidency of the Council during his term.

[*The speaker continued in English.*]

44. In presenting its complaint before this body, the Government of Nicaragua continues to ignore the central fact that it has a serious problem with many of its own countrymen. Rather than accept this reality and seek ways to come to terms with the growing opposition to Sandinist policies through negotiation of a peaceful settlement, the Sandinists have sought to crush all forms of domestic opposition sentiment and to portray the democratic armed resistance as a reactionary mercenary force organized by the United States. Unfortunately, the Nicaraguan Government's insistence on perpetuating this fantasy has been the most serious obstacle to peace in the region.

45. The Nicaraguan representative has referred to the Reagan Administration. I would simply point out that the Reagan Administration is the Government of the United States through the free choice of the American people, with the opposition having access to all the means and media, something that has not been given to the people of Nicaragua.

46. At the heart of the Central American conflict is the striving of the peoples of the Isthmus to realize their right to a voice in the affairs of their Government. Central America is coming of age, moving strongly into the mainstream of Western democratic tradition. The hard-won fruits of development have meant a better educated, better fed and better informed populace that has in recent years asserted—with greater and greater clarity—its desire to have a Government responsible to the will of the people. The United States has consistently supported this development, and, I might note, we have supported it in Nicaragua as well. After the revolution of 1979, the United States provided the Nicaraguan Government with $119 million in economic assistance and supported Nicaraguan requests for many millions more in multilateral financial institutions.

47. With the exception of Nicaragua, this economic and social development has been paralleled by marked progress towards democracy. Last Sunday Guatemala held a run-off election, the final step before the inauguration of a civilian president in that country. Honduras has just completed elections. Costa Ricans will go to the polls in February. Most recently, El Salvador held elections for its Legislative Assembly in March of this year, the last in a series of four democratic elections since 1982. All these elections by Nicaragua's neighbours had, or will have, one ingredient essential to democratic process—until the votes are counted, no one knows who is going to win. That sweet mystery, how the people will finally speak, is the essence of democracy.

48. In contrast there was no mystery to the so-called election held in Nicaragua in November of last year. As sure as the Republic of Nicaragua's flag is blue and white, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, the candidate of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional, the standard bearer of the red and black flag, was destined to be anointed by those elections. Any lingering wisp of mystery was systematically eliminated by the Sandinists as they excluded from the elections the major opposition groups and structured the proceedings to ensure their victory. As a result, on 4 November we sadly watched the clock turn back to the days of the Somoza dynasty and the Nicaraguan people were obliged to participate in another staged mockery of democratic process, a facade to perpetuate in power those who already ran the country. That election—which, since there was no real choice, defies the definition of an election—was but one step in the inexorable movement towards a single-party State in Nicaragua.

49. Much was made two months ago of the 15 October 1985 announcement by Daniel Ortega Saavedra of a "new" state of emergency. In fact, the official suspension of all basic civil liberties—including freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and freedom from arbitrary arrest—was merely the codification of what have been the facts of life with which Nicaraguans have

lived for years. The decree was significant, not because repression of civil liberties is new in Nicaragua under the Sandinists, but because up until that time the Sandinists had moved against the opposition with a certain care, with the deft touch of political manipulators aware of the value of a token independent sector to show off to the free world and use to justify continued economic and political support from Western countries.

50. What is new is not the state of emergency itself, but the scope and intensity of the assault against virtually all elements of the civil opposition. The fact that the Sandinists chose to bear the international cost of this course of action indicates how deeply concerned they have become with growing political dissent. The armed democratic opposition which the Sandinists had repeatedly dismissed as a temporary irritant with no popular support – which was soon to be eliminated – lingered on and grew in strength, and again and again the Sandinists moved back the deadline for their annihilation. From 7,000 to 8,000 men in mid-1984, the armed resistance has grown to some 20,000 men and women under arms – a force to be reckoned with and many times the size of the Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional itself when it came to power in 1979. We have been told that revolution cannot be exported; neither can counter-revolution. It has to be indigenous.

51. The Sandinists present the struggle against their attempt to impose a totalitarian régime as some vast conspiracy organized by the United States. The heroic Nicaraguan people continue to discredit this often-repeated charge. The Sandinists will never succeed in portraying thousands of Nicaraguan citizens who have taken up arms to resist the perversion of their revolution as paid mercenaries of a foreign Power. Can the Sandinists really believe that some 20,000 members of the armed resistance in Nicaragua would risk their lives by challenging the largest armed force ever assembled in Central America for anything less than patriotic motives?

52. The patriotism of these men and women is based on two deeply felt emotions: hope and fear—hope that the original democratic goals of the revolution can still be realized; fear of a deepening repression not seen since the worst days of the Somoza régime. These two powerful emotions have contributed to the remarkable and consistent growth of the armed resistance. Despite the hardships and the sacrifice, the disparate groups of the resistance, most of whom fought bravely for the goals of the original revolution, have come together in a struggle for liberty against Sandinist repression.

53. It is worth noting that the rank and file of the resistance forces are for the most part young people in their late teens and early 20s, men and women whose only political reality has been Sandinist rule. They can hardly be attached to the past; they have only childhood memories of the Somoza dictatorship. Their political attitudes have been formed since the revolution in 1979, and their reaction over time has been to repudiate the grim totalitarian system that has been progressively imposed on them.

54. It is also ironic that the Government of Nicaragua laments that the use of a SAM-7 surface-to-air missile represents an escalation of the Central American conflict to new levels and labels the armed resistance a "terrorist" organization – this from a Government which introduced into Central America the most advanced helicopter equipment in the region. The MI-24, which the Government of Nicaragua began receiving from the Soviet Union last year, is one of the world's most sophisticated attack helicopters. The Sandinists' acquisition of MI-24s introduced a frightening new dimension to warfare in Central America. They wish to intimidate not only Nicaraguan opposition elements, but also their neighbours – Honduras, Costa Rica and El Salvador – which are all within reach of this "flying tank" and none of which has a comparable weapon.

55. Of course, I do not have access to the confidential sources to which the Nicaraguan representative referred. The MI-24 was only the latest addition to what has been a massive military buildup in Nicaragua, beginning immediately after the overthrow of Somoza in 1979. I might add that no other Latin American country in history – except Cuba, of course – has ever received weapons so capable of killing people as the MI-24. The Sandinists, in addition to increasing the size of the armed forces to the unprecedented level of 119,000 troops, has amassed an increasing inventory of tanks, artillery, helicopters and other Soviet bloc equipment – including, I might add, hundreds of Soviet-made and supplied SAM-7 surface-to-air missiles – which threaten and intimidate their neighbours and their own people. We estimate the Soviet bloc arms shipments to the Sandinist Government have totalled some $500 million. These shipments have included some 340 tanks and armoured vehicles, 70 long-range howitzers and rocket launchers and 30 helicopters, including a dozen fast, heavily armed attack helicopters. The Sandinists' arms inventories dwarf those of the combined forces of their Central American neighbours. As a matter of fact and of interest, Nicaragua has three times as many tanks as Mexico, which has 30 times the population of Nicaragua.

56. Armed to the teeth, the Sandinists have hopelessly upset the military equilibrium in Central America, creating the major security problem for the region, a problem, I might add, which the Government of Nicaragua seems very reluctant to deal with in the Contadora process.

57. With regard to the reference to the International Court of Justice, I might add that of the 15 judges on that Court, 10 of the countries to which those judges belong reject the compulsory authority of the International Court of Justice, including some of Nicaragua's closest friends.

58. In typical "Alice in Wonderland" fashion, the Sandinists are now asserting, contrary to fact, that its attack helicopter was downed by an "anti-air projectile of the red-eye type, also known as a SAM-7". The statement is typical of Sandinist innuendo. By using the term "red-eye", it implies that the missile is of United States manufacture. "Red-eye" means that the projectile is heat-seeking. Nicaragua knows that this projectile is not

of United States manufacture. The United States is prohibited by law from providing lethal equipment to the Nicaraguan resistance and it has abided strictly by that law. The Nicaraguan armed resistance has stated that it has Soviet-manufactured SAM-7s acquired on the international market.

59. It is also ironic that the Sandinists should call the democratic resistance a "terrorist" organization which might constitute a threat to civilian aviation. This from a régime which has opened its borders to the most notorious international terrorist groups in the world, groups which have raised to new heights of barbarity the practice of terrorism against innocent civilians.

60. The reference was made to an Orwellian view of things. That was a look in the mirror on the part of Nicaragua.

61. In addition to aid to the Colombian M-19, which carried out the recent assault on Colombia's Palace of Justice, the Sandinists have provided logistical, material and moral support to other Latin American terrorist groups such as the Argentine Montoneros, the Uruguayan Tupamaros and the Chilean MIR. In Central America, the Sandinists have provided safe houses, communications headquarters, arms depots, vehicles shops, training camps and transport of military supplies, including arms, to the Salvadorian guerrillas. Sandinist involvement in Salvadorian guerrilla terrorism was particularly evident during the recent kidnapping of President Duarte's daughter, when negotiations concerning her release were channelled through Managua.

62. Nicaragua's other neighbours – Honduras and Costa Rica – have also suffered from Nicaraguan-sponsored subversion in the form of armed attacks, bombings, attempted assassinations and other violence. Nor is Nicaragua's role as a haven for terrorism confined solely to Latin America. The Sandinists have also offered refuge to terrorists from Europe and have assiduously developed contacts with terrorist groups from the Middle East.

63. Evidence of Cuban participation in combat activities against the Nicaraguan people will not come as any surprise to this body. The increasingly important role Cuban military advisers have come to play in combat against the Nicaraguan resistance was illustrated by the fact that there were Cubans aboard the helicopter shot down by the resistance forces. My Government has compiled an extensive list of reports from Nicaraguan citizens, most of them former soldiers who have witnessed the growing Cuban role in the Sandinist armed forces. These accounts detail the Cuban security and military network and the omnipresence of Cuban advisers, trainers and technicians from command levels in the Ministries of Interior and Defence down to individual combat platoons and from the operation of equipment, including Soviet-supplied helicopters, in combat to the disciplining of individual Nicaraguan soldiers.

64. According to former Sandinist officials, the massive Cuban presence has caused dissatisfaction, with many Nicaraguans complaining of the "Cubanization" of their country. Not surprisingly, they believe the Cubans are trying to impose on Nicaragua a system which is not applicable to the current Nicaraguan reality. Recent defector information as well as debriefings of Sandinist prisoners of war have shown that Cuban officers have taken over key positions in several of the Sandinist special counter-insurgency battalions. The intelligence operations of the Nicaraguan resistance have also determined that the Cuban-advised Sandinist forces have infiltrated impostors who, claiming to be resistance fighters, have attempted to carry out assassinations of key resistance commanders. Multiple sources have confirmed that the Sandinists, as part of their campaign to discredit the armed resistance, have established clandestine guerrilla units which pose as resistance bands and carry out attacks on Nicaraguan civilians.

65. The 10 Nicaraguan requests to convene the Security Council continue to manifest a tedious regularity and a transparency of purpose. On every occasion that Nicaragua has appeared before the Council, it has sought either to forestall the progress of the Contadora process or to interfere in the internal affairs of the United States by seeking to influence our domestic political debate about Central America. In either case, Nicaragua has deliberately misused the Council and converted it into a propaganda forum precisely at a time when its democratic neighbours have attempted to work, through the Contadora process, to achieve a negotiated settlement to a regional conflict.

66. Most recently Nicaragua declined to attend meetings in Cartagena to discuss the future of Contadora, and now it calls for a six-month suspension of the Contadora negotiations. Nicaragua was the only country to vote against a recent resolution on Contadora in the General Assembly of the Organization of American States which called for the Central American countries and the Contadora Group to persevere in their efforts to conclude the negotiations to achieve a peace agreement. Contadora's most fundamental premise is that the regional crisis is a Latin American crisis and that it can best be addressed by Latin Americans themselves. The United States continues to believe that the Contadora negotiating process offers the best prospect for achieving peace in Central America. We hope that Nicaragua will soon decide to join its neighbours in working towards that goal.

67. Now is not the moment to abandon Contadora. The Government of Nicaragua would have us condone its unilateral refusal to continue a negotiating process after more than two years of arduous efforts to narrow the areas of difference in an extremely complex regional pattern. We in this body are all well aware of the effort required to build a lasting peace. Two years of negotiations seem very little, given the complexity of the issues, the necessity for adequate verification mechanisms and the requirement that the final agreement comprehensively embrace the full range of concerns of five different nations. Contadora's accomplishments are far from meagre.

68. Begun in January 1983, the Contadora negotiations produced in September of that year the basis for an

agreement in the Document of Objectives [*S/16041, annex*] which all parties agreed to and which still serves as a basic framework for agreement. The process moved from this framework document to the discussion of draft agreements, which were submitted in late 1984. During the course of this year the areas of disagreement have been drastically narrowed. Again, as progress towards a negotiated settlement gains momentum, Nicaragua balks and comes before the United Nations, as it has many times before, to divert international opinion away from its own intransigence. Nicaragua refuses to negotiate further and unilaterally proposes that the Contadora talks be suspended for six months.

69. To what end, one must ask. Will Nicaragua use this time to defuse violent dissent within its borders by opening the political system to the country's opposition elements, to implement its solemn obligation in the Contadora process to promote national reconciliation? The Government of Nicaragua's recent actions make it difficult for us to imagine that it will pursue that wise course. Rather, it would appear that the Sandinists will continue to ignore the reality of growing domestic opposition to their policies and will instead shrilly blame this phenomenon on external factors.

70. I reiterate my country's firm belief that the Sandinists bear the full responsibility for the consequences of their aggression against the Nicaraguan people and their neighbours. It is our fervent hope that this incident will bring home to the *commandantes* in Managua the cost of their oppression and hostile actions. For the sake of peace in Nicaragua and the rest of Central America, the Sandinists must urgently take steps to come to terms with their own people.

71. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Acting Minister for External Relations of Nicaragua has asked to be allowed to speak in exercise of the right of reply, and I call on him.

72. Mr. TINOCO (Nicaragua) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I will be brief. I wish only to make some basic clarification and a number of suggestions.

73. First, as regards Nicaragua's position on Contadora, it is surprising that a representative of the United States Government should come here and pose as a defender of a genuine Latin American effort, against which the United States Government has been fighting for the past two years.

74. The United States Government is precisely that which month after month has been refusing to respond in practice to the request of the Contadora Group that it put an end to its aggression against Nicaragua. On numberless occasions the Contadora Group has called for an end to the policies that increase tension in the area, but the United States has done the exact opposite and continues to step up its war of aggression.

75. It is the Government of the United States, which now claims to be defending and upholding Contadora, that has systematically refused to resume the bilateral negotiations with Nicaragua, which are crucial to any new peace initiative in the region. It has refused to respond positively to Contadora's request for the resumption of the bilateral talks. And not only does it refuse under devious pretexts whenever the Contadora Group proposes a resumption of those bilateral talks, but it automatically produces a high-level statement rejecting that approach.

76. I will give a concrete example. On 9 January 1985 the Contadora Group, for the first time, called upon the Governments of the United States and Nicaragua in a declaration [*S/16889, annex*] to proceed in greater depth with the Manzanillo talks to enable the Contadora negotiating process to make progress. On 17 January, just a week later, the United States unilaterally broke off those talks. That is the kind of support and backing that the United States has been giving the Contadora process. Its backing amounts to disrespect for and ignoring of this kind of appeal by the Contadora Group.

77. But the most serious matter here is that the United States has tried hard to create the fiction in Central America that it is possible to reach an agreement among the Central American Governments without first halting the United States war against Nicaragua. This has not been done in private, diplomatic talks but as open rejection, amounting to a negation, of the Contadora process. Secretary of State George Shultz, for example, in the Cayman Islands on his way to the meeting of the Organization of American States at Cartagena, made statements, which were published in the *Los Angeles Times* on 2 December 1985, in which he said outright that even if the five Central American countries were to sign a peace agreement the United States would continue to support the counter-revolution. That is the kind of support that the United States Government has been giving the Contadora process. That is the reality of the systematic United States policy towards Contadora and that is what has put the Contadora process in its present difficult position, in which it is impossible to make progress precisely because of the total lack of willingness by the United States to come to an understanding with the Nicaraguan revolution and seek a negotiated, political way out of the Central American crisis.

78. With regard to another remark, I was struck by the fact that in his statement the representative of the United States seemed to be saying that his Government is prevented by law from giving weapons or missiles to mercenary forces and that the United States Government is complying strictly with that prohibition. If that is true, I would suggest to that representative that he should suggest to Mr. Shultz that he in turn should suggest to the Department of State that it send an official note to the Government of Nicaragua denying that it has supplied missiles to the counter-revolutionaries and confirming that it has given no kind of help to those forces to acquire that type of weapon. I think that would possibly be a constructive result of United States participation in this debate.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

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